

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 600  
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 7642

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, VT, SP  
SUBJ: VATICAN'S CASAROLI VISITS SPAIN AGAIN  
FOR CONCORDAT DISCUSSIONS

REF: MADRID 4662 AND MADRID 7568

BEGIN SUMMARY: MSGR. CASAROLI IS CURRENTLY VISITING SPAIN FOR THREE DAYS TO CONTINUE VATICAN-GOS DIALOGUE REGARDING CONCORDAT, SPANISH EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE, WHICH ISSUED IMPORTANT LIBERAL COMMUNIQUE CONTAINING POLITICAL CRITICISM OF GOVT LAST WEEKEND, REPORTEDLY IS UPSET OVER VISIT (WHICH IT HAD SOUGHT TO PREVENT, OR AT LEAST DELAY) AND HAS SENT OFF PROTEST COMMUNICATIONS TO POPE. PAPAL NUNCIO IS ALSO REPORTED OPPOSED TO VISIT. PRINCIPAL BENEFICIARY OF VISIT WILL BE GOS, WHICH CAN SEEK TO GIVE IMPRESSION THAT REAL PROGRESS IS BEING MADE DUE TO SPANISH DIPLOMACY AND THAT SPANISH EPISCOPATE HAS NO ROLE TO PLAY SINCE NEGOTIATIONS ARE BILATERAL AFFAIR STRICTLY BETWEEN SOVEREIGN STATES (I.E., GOS AND VATICAN). END SUMMARY

1. ON DEC 4, MSGR. AGOSTINO CASAROLI, VATICAN SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS, ARRIVED IN SPAIN FOR A REPORTED THREE-DAY VISIT. PURPOSE OF VISIT IS TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN VATICAN AND GOS REGARDING NEGOTIATIONS FOR REVISION OF CONCORDAT. IT ALSO IS RETURN VISIT FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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SPANISH FONMIN CORTINA'S VISIT TO ROME IN JULY OF THIS

YEAR (MADRID 4662), AT WHICH TIME IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT NEXT STEP IN PROCESS WOULD BE ANOTHER VISIT BY MSGR. CASAROLI TO SPAIN THIS FALL. BOTH GOS AND VATICAN ARE KEEPING SUBSTANCE OF TALKS, AND EVEN CASAROLI'S SCHEDULE, A SECRET, AND IT HAS ONLY BEEN ANNOUNCED THAT CASAROLI WILL MEET SEPARATELY WITH CORTINA AND WITH EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENT TARANCON (ALTHOUGH IT WOULD APPEAR LIKELY HE WOULD ALSO CALL ON PRESIDENT ARIAS, AND MIGHT EVEN CALL ON PRINCE, OR EVEN POSSIBLY ON FRANCO).

2. ACCORDING VARIOUS SPANISH CHURCH SOURCES, MAJORITY OF EPISCOPATE CONSIDER CASAROLI'S VISIT AT THIS TIME INOPPORTUNE AND ILL ADVISED AND ARE VERY UPSET THAT THIS PROMINENT VATICAN LEADER HAS COME TO SPAIN JUST NOW ON HIS THIRD VISIT IN LITTLE MORE THAN A YEAR. SPANISH EPISCOPATE HAD REPORTEDLY TRIED TO PERSUADE POPE NOT TO SEND CASAROLI TO SPAIN AT THIS TIME. CASAROLI WAS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO COMEIN OCTOBER, BUT SPANISH EPISCOPATE WAS APPARENTLY SUCCESSFUL IN DELAYING VISIT AND HAD THOUGHT IT WOULD BE POSTPONED UNTIL SPRING 1975. AT OCTOBER ROME SYNOD THREE LEADING SPANISH CARDINALS, I.E., TARANCON OF MADRID, JUBANY OF BARCELONA, AND GONZALEZ MARTIN OF TOLEDO, HAD EVEN REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED MATTER WITH POPE DURING AUDIENCE WHERE TARANCON AND JUBANY SOUGHT TO DISSUADE POPE FROM SENDING CASAROLI TO SPAIN IN NEAR FUTURE ON GROUNDS SPANISH POLITICAL SITUATION AT PRESENT WAS TOO UNCERTAIN AND THAT VISIT AT THIS TIME WHEN REGIME CONSERVATIVES APPEAR TO BE GAINING GROUND, WOULD ONLY APPEAR TO COMPROMISE CHURCH. CONSERVATIVE CARDINAL GONZALEZ MARTIN OF TOLEDO, WHO IS SPANISH PRIMATE, REPORTEDLY DISAGREED WITH HIS TWO FELLOW PRELATES IN FRONT OF POPE AND EXPRESSED VIEW A CASAROLI VISIT MIGHT BE BENEFICIAL.

3. IT THEREFORE CAMEAS COMPLETE SURPRISE WHEN, ON FINAL DAY (DEC 1) OF LAST WEEK'S PLENARY OF SPANISH EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE, IT WAS LEARNED THAT CASAROLI WOULD BE COMING ANYWAY, DESPITE MAJORITY SENTIMENT IN EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE AGAINST SUCH A VISIT. EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE REPORTEDLY ANGRILY REACTED BY SENDING A COMMUNICATION TO POPE, SIGNED CONFIDENTIAL

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BY A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF BISHOPS, INDICATING THAT A MAJORITY WITHIN EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE FELT IT WAS VERY UNFORTUNATE THAT POPE HAD DECIDED, AGAINST EARLIER ADVICE, TO SEND CASAROLI TO SPAIN. SUBSEQUENTLY, THREE MOST LIBERAL SPANISH CARDINALS, I.E., TARANCON, JUBANY, AND BUENO MONREAL OF SEVILLE, SENT JOINT LETTER TO POPE WITH SAME ARGUMENTS ASSERTING THEY FELT CASAROLI VISIT AT THIS TIME WAS SERIOUS ERROR.

4. ACCORDING TO ECCLESIASTICAL SOURCES, MSGR. DADAGLIO, PAPAL NUNCIO, WAS ALSO STRONGLY OPPOSED TO CASAROLI VISIT, AND ALLEGEDLY WAS NOT CONSULTED BY VATICAN ABOUT VISIT OR ITS TIMING. (IT IS WELL-KNOWN THAT NUNCIO IS ALSO STRONG PARTISAN OF MAJORITY POSITION IN SPANISH EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE THAT CHURCH SHOULD DELIBERATELY DRAG ITS FEET ON CONCORDAT NEGOTIATIONS TO AWAIT POST-FRANCO ERA.) NUNCIO HAS THEREFORE BEEN SOMEWHAT UNDER CUT BY POPE'S SENDING CASAROLI WITHOUT HEEDING DADAGLIO'S SUGGESTIONS TO CONTRARY.

5. SPANISH EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE ALSO FEELS TIMING OF CASAROLI VISIT IS WORST POSSIBLE SINCE, UPON CONCLUSION OF BISHOPS CONFERENCE DEC 1, FAR-REACHING LIBERAL COMMUNIQUE, APPROVED BY ALL BUT SIX OF 89 BISHOPS ATTENDING, WAS ISSUED WHICH TOUCHED UPON POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MATTERS. COMMUNIQUE CONTAINED IMPLICIT INTERVENTION IN SECULAR AFFAIRS BY CALLING ON GOVT TO ASSURE CHANNELS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION FOR ALL CITIZENS, BOTH INDIVIDUALLY AND IN ASSOCIATIONS, WITHOUT ARBITRARY DISCRIMINATIONS AND WITH APPROPRIATE JURIDICAL GUARANTEES (MADRID 7568). IT ALSO CRITICIZED GOVT MEASURES AGAINST LIBERAL PRIESTS AND CALLED FOR GENERAL AMNESTY IN CONNECTION WITH 1974 HOLY YEAR. BISHOPS NOW FEEL THAT WARM PUBLIC RECEPTION GIVEN TO BOLD AND SWEEPING LIBERAL LANGUAGE REFLECTED IN THIS DOCUMENT, ISSUED ON EVE OF GOVT'S UNVEILING OF ITS LIMITED DRAFT STATUTE ON POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONISM, MAY BE SOMEWHAT NULLIFIED BY FACT THAT FEW DAYS LATER ONE OF VATICAN'S HIGHEST PRELATES IS VISITING SPAIN TO NEGOTIATE WITH SAME SPANISH GOVT WHICH BISHOPS CONFERENCE HAS INDIRECTLY CRITICIZED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

6. COMMENT: MOST OBSERVERS ARE SKEPTICAL THAT ANY REAL  
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PROGRESS WILL BE MADE DURING CASAROLI VISIT ON SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS CONCERNING CONCORDAT. IT IS SOMETHING OF A MYSTERY, THEREFORE, WHY POPE DECIDED TO SEND CASAROLI TO SPAIN AFTER ALL, ALTHOUGH IT IS BELIEVED POPE MAY HAVE SUCCUMBED TO CONTINUING PRESSURES BY SPANISH GOVT TO KEEP CONCORDAT DIALOGUE MOVING. GOS STANDS TO BENEFIT MOST FROM CASAROLI VISIT AT THIS TIME, AT LEAST FROM POINT OF VIEW OF ITS PUBLIC IMAGE. AS IS ITS CUSTOM, GOS IS GIVING EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY TO VISIT, PRESUMABLY TO GIVE IMPRESSION THAT REAL PROGRESS IS BEING MADE ON CONCORDAT DUE TO SUCCESS OF SPANISH DIPLOMACY. VISIT WILL ALSO HAVE EFFECT OF STRESSING THAT GOS ONLY DEALS WITH VATICAN ON CONCORDAT ISSUES, AND CAN IGNORE TROUBLESOME SPANISH EPISCOPATE AND ITS LIBERAL VIEWS, A POINT THAT HAS BEEN HIGHLY IMPORTANT TO GOS FROM OUTSET.

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## Message Attributes

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